

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the present amendment and in light of the following discussions, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended and Claim 16 has been added herewith. The changes to the claims are supported by the originally filed specification and do not introduce any new matter.

In the previous Office Action, claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,141,341 (hereinafter “the ‘341 patent”) to Jones et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,137,877 (hereinafter “the ‘877 patent”) to Robin et al. These ground for rejection are moot in light of the amendments to the claims.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the courtesy of the interviews granted to Applicants' attorney on July 27 and 29, 2004 at which time the outstanding issues in this case were discussed. During the interview, the Examiner indicated that he felt clarifications in the claims would better enable the present invention to be appreciated. The Examiner indicated that clarified claims would likely distinguish over the art of record, but no formal agreement was reached pending the Examiner's detailed consideration of the application upon formal submission of a response to the outstanding Official Action.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of the ‘341 patent and the ‘877 patent is unsustainable. The previous office action admits that the ‘341 patent does not disclose “a telephone number converter for converting the buffered series of digits from a first number, accessible by the first telephone line interface but not accessible via the second telephone line interface, to a second number, accessible via the first and second telephone line interfaces, such that the call processor directs the outgoing call to the second telephone line interface using the second number,” as claimed in claim 1. However claim 1 now recites, “a telephone

number converter for converting ~~the buffered series of digits from~~ a first number, accessible by the first telephone line interface but not accessible via the second telephone line interface, to a second number, accessible via the first and second telephone line interfaces when the first number is determined to match the stored telephone number, such that the call processor directs the outgoing call to the second telephone line interface using the second number when the first number is determined to match the stored telephone number,” which is not taught by any of the applied references.

The office action cites col. 11, line 24 to col. 13, line 55 of the ‘877 patent as teaching a “microprocessor capable of converting from a first number to a second number accessible by a local service provider or Internet service provider” but does not actually allege that the “telephone number converter” limitation of claim 1 is taught. Claim 1 recites “a telephone number converter for converting a first number, accessible by the first telephone line interface but not accessible via the second telephone line interface, to a second number, accessible via the first and second telephone line interfaces when the first number is determined to match the stored telephone number, such that the call processor directs the outgoing call to the second telephone line interface using the second number when the first number is determined to match the stored telephone number.” The office action does not even allege that the claimed relationship between the first number and the second number is met by the ‘877 patent.

The ‘877 patent describes processing numbers which are accessible by a first network into numbers which are accessible by a second network, albeit at a potentially lower rate. However, this is not what is claimed. The ‘877 patent does not disclose converting numbers which correspond to inaccessible numbers (e.g., 800 numbers on a VoIP network) to accessible ones. Col. 10, lines 34-39 of the ‘877 patent describe that 700, 800, 888 and 900 numbers are all part of exclusion lists. Particularly, that section states:

If the second through fourth numbers of the dialing sequence match any of the numbers on the exclusion list (or if the number sequence begins with a "10" or "\*\*"), then the microprocessor 40 would cause the DTMF transmitter 50 to dial the stored digits, or would simply let the originally dialed call proceed if it was dialed out to the access line in the first place.

Emphasis added.

Similarly, col. 12, lines 56-65, describes a second embodiment where the numbers which are inaccessible are again not converted. That section states:

For example, the telephone dialing device could preliminarily decide whether the telephone number dialing sequence was a "valid" sequence (i.e., one that begins with a "1" or a "011" sequence) by first routing any excluded numbers (i.e., numbers beginning with "10" or "1700" or "1800" or "1900" or "1888" or numbers on a list of local area codes or numbers not beginning with "1," "011" or "\*\*") outside of the system of the present invention for dialing under the default carrier code.

Emphasis added.

In fact, this distinction can be seen in even greater detail where the claim actually recites that the stored number is a toll-free number (e.g., see claims 2 and 3). This failure of the '877 patent results in not achieving the result described in the previous response, i.e., routing additional traffic over the second network now that an accessible number is known for it.

Since the '877 patent excluded processing of 700, 800, 888 and 900 numbers, it is clear that the '877 patent did not even appreciate the problem being solved by the present invention. As a result, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify the teachings of the '877 patent to arrive at the claimed invention. Accordingly,

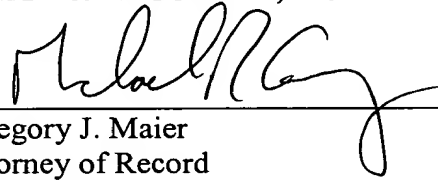
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claim 1 is not rendered obvious by the combination of applied references since the same positively recited limitation is missing from both applied references. Likewise, since all other rejections were previously based on the rejection of claim 1, those rejections too should be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome and in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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